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National Public Health Week -

April 4-10, 2011

**This year’s theme is
“Safety is No Accident:
Live Injury-Free.”**

**You can protect
yourself, your family
and community by
taking action, both big
and small, to prevent
injury.**

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HOPE Coalition Celebrates to Revitalize

The HOPE Coalition in Hempstead County hosted their annual celebration meeting in March, but added a new spin. In an effort to revitalize the organizational structure and increase active membership, the HOPE Coalition Executive Committee designed a meeting that would bring in new community members that would have the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of all coalition projects. For each project, a leader was designated to develop a Power Point presentation with many pictures to describe the project in detail.

The new coalition President, Jodi Coffee, offered the welcome which was accompanied by a motivational talk to encourage new members to participate in improving the health of county residents.

Renee Sells and Geri Maxfield, Hope

Public School nurses, presented their “Color Me” project that introduces fresh fruits and vegetables to primary and elementary students.

Each month, a community group or agency commits to developing a weekly skit to perform for the students to reinforce the benefits of a healthy diet. Tammy Goodwin, CCCUA Nursing In-

structor, discussed the Weight Watchers program and the procedures to initiate a program in Hope as an opportunity to participate in a healthy weight management support program.

Stephanie Buckley, Farmers Market Manager, provided a presentation about the Hempstead County Farmers Market and several ideas to utilize the market setting as a venue to deliver health related programs and/or educational oppor-

tunities.

The plans for the 16th Annual Family Health Expo to be held in the fall were discussed by Les Patterson. He also provided a picture presentation of the 2010 Expo.

In an effort to address underage drinking in the community, Detective Jesus Coronado of the Hope Police Department presented on many youth focused projects that have been accomplished through the Enforcing Underage Drinking Grant. Jodi Coffee shared about the Women Can Run project that is going on currently. This is a 10 week exercise clinic that provides health walking/running techniques along with other health education sessions. The program wraps up with the members participating in a state walk/run. Each participant was asked to sign up to actively participate on at least one coalition project. The coalition was able to secure many new members.



Funding Your Future 2011

HHI Sustainability Conference

March hosted the 3rd Annual HHI Sustainability Conference in Little Rock. It was an opportunity to learn about wonderful and innovative health initiatives throughout the state and build new relationships. The Southwest Region was well represented with many ADH Hometown Health colleagues and over 20 community volunteers. Bonnie Carr, Rural Health Specialist, offered an informative presentation on the projects and programs of the five SWR counties that she works directly with.

Hometown Health is truly linking with other state-level health initiative organizations for true collaboration. Billy Parrish from the Arkansas Cancer Coalition attended the conference and wrote an article about the Impact of HHI on Arkansas.

Scenario #1: You live a rural Arkansas county. You do pretty good for yourself with what you've got—but what you've got ain't a whole lot. And that's okay, you're a proud person and you don't like too many folks meddling. You have your friends and family and the folks who've been around your whole life and that's all you want. Money is tight, so the extra creaks and cracks, shortness of breath, maybe a bigger bulge around the belly lately, aren't as much of a concern as taking care of those endless bills. The clinic is about 30 miles on the other side of the county anyways, and have you seen gas prices! After long hours at work, it's a nice idea to just zip through a drive-thru on the way home. The family will be fed and that's one last thing to worry about. A cheeseburger has lettuce and tomatoes, and french fries are just a chopped up vegetable. The kids will be all right. You're low on smokes, one more stop and the couch is calling your name.

Scenario #2: You are a public health worker in Little Rock poring over the latest county statistics in report after report. After

a day full of meetings, and even before the next full day of meetings, it's pretty clear better health behaviors are needed in so and so county. You have a pile of studies showing that if just a couple of things changed life could be dramatically different. Tobacco prevention and cessation. Increased physical activity. Better diets. Regular check-ups and screenings. A number of pilot programs have demonstrated strong correlation between health interventions and improved risk assessments. You know, generally, what needs to be done, but how do you do it? What are the strategies that will meet an objective that will get this county to their goal? There hasn't been a peer-reviewed article, yet, that says standing in a town square shouting at strangers to do "this" and stop doing "that" is effective. And what exactly are the barriers to "this" and "that" in so and so county? A place that is less than two hours away might as well be on the other side of the Mississippi, or the Ozarks, if you don't have some feet on the ground.

Somewhere between these two scenarios, these rural Arkansans and the centralized health institutions here to serve them, comes a vital linkage: the Hometown Health Improvement (HHI) coalitions.

From their website: "Through a strategic planning initiative, the Arkansas Department of Health determined that to solve today's health problems would require cooperative action and creative solutions at the local level. The health of the community is a shared responsibility of many entities. Hometown Health Improvement brings together a wide range of people and organizations including consumers, business leaders, health care providers, elected officials, religious leaders, and educators to identify community health problems and develop and implement ways to solve them.

Hometown Health Improvement is a locally

owned and locally controlled initiative that stresses: collaboration, coalition building, community health assessment, prioritization of health issues, and the development and implementation of community health strategies that are locally designed and sustained."

HHI's from across the state met March 29 - 31, 2011 for a three day conference to share success stories, strategies, and learn new methods of sustainability. How can the people of Montgomery County become more physically active? Bonnie Carr, of the Montgomery County Health Education Advisory Board reported on the broad coalition that came together and utilized unique local features to build the magnificent Lake Ouachita Vista Trail (which folks around there call "LOViT"). Faulkner County Healthy Weight Coalition works to make sure a community of bike enthusiasts have safe streets to ride. They also organize "bike rodeos" at elementary schools. How can the people of Lincoln, Chicot and Desha Counties get health information they're more likely to trust and even act on? Organize the stars of the STAR Health program, active and influential community leaders who connect women to services like WIC, says Kaye Murray, Southeast coordinator of HHI. "They go places I can't go and connect resources."

In one of the poorest 200 counties in the nation, Lincoln County, the HHI hosts "Walk to Remember," an event to honor the babies that were not born. Teddy bears are provided to mothers who go home from the hospital without their babies.

HHI's were encouraged to think about building capacity and "funding your future," as the conference was titled. There were lessons on grant writing, workshops on the "power of partnerships," and plenty of opportunities for collaboration building.

Nashville is a Growing Healthy Community

The Howard County Health Improvement (HCHI) Coalition's Veggie Swap Committee partnered with the Howard County Farmers Market and the City of Nashville to write and be awarded a \$12,000 Growing Healthy Communities (GHC) grant through the Arkansas Coalition on Obesity. Although it is a City of Nashville grant, the HCHI's Veggie Swap Committee was reorganized to encompass a more broad spectrum to carry out the grant projects, so it was changed to the Growing Healthy Communities Committee.

The focus of the committee is to encourage healthy nutrition by finding ways to increase the availability of locally-grown fresh produce. This committee partners with the Howard County Farmers' Market and Red Dirt Master Gardeners, who maintain a local demonstration organic garden that donates produce to local senior citizens and WIC recipients.

The GHC Committee has been charged to develop and implement a plan to encourage active lifestyles and healthy nutrition. The

City was also awarded up to \$3,000 to host a "Growing Healthy Communities Summit" to share with others the plan that is developed.

As part of the GHC grant, there were nine Nashville stakeholders who attended an immersion training at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institution at Petit Jean where they were provided the tools and knowledge to develop a comprehensive county plan to improve nutrition and exercise.

DASH Coalition Has a Busy Season

The DASH Coalition has been busy this spring. DASH Your Weight Off kicked off on March 14th. Twenty-eight women and one man signed up. Individuals were weighed and their BMI was calculated. Free aerobic classes were offered to participants four nights a week at the Fordyce Civic Center. This is a seven week program and the person who loses the most weight or reduces their BMI will win \$50 in "chamber bucks" to be redeemed at local businesses.

DASH also hosted an annual health fair at the Fordyce Civic Center that had approxi-

mately thirty vendors. Screenings for cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure, HIV, bone density, diabetic foot checks, prostate exams, mammograms, and car seat safety checks were provided. One booth focused on tobacco prevention and cessation and encouraged participants to sign up for the Tobacco Cessation class scheduled for March 22nd.

The March 22nd Tobacco Cessation Class was offered to area residents free of charge. In an effort to recruit participation, Donna Ferguson also posted flyers at area businesses, doctor offices, and the hospital. There

were six people that signed up and several more calls from interested residents. The class was held on a Tuesday night from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at the DCMC Hospital cafeteria. Teresa Pribilski, Certified Tobacco Specialist, from Hope was the class counselor. She provided a two hour educational session focused on cessation techniques. Donna Ferguson, Dallas County Health Unit Administrator, was interviewed on TKO talk show at KBJT Radio Station. She was able to talk about the health fair, DASH Across Dallas County, DASH Your Weight Off, and the smoking cessation class.

"Color Me" Fresh Fruit & Vegetables

Clinton Primary School in Hempstead County offers a monthly "Color Me" program to introduce fresh fruits and vegetables to students. For the past two years Renee Sells, District Nurse, has received a USDA grant to supplement the program. First and second grade students at Clinton Primary have been dancing, brushing their teeth, and making great food choices as this year's Color Me programs continue. Color Me Radio Disney brought Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse, along with members of the Radio Disney group, to teach the children the importance of staying active. The presentation included dancing, competitions, ideas for exercise, and some of today's most popular music. The Radio Disney crew

shared with the audience that exercise comes in a variety of forms from skateboarding to swimming. The snack for January was a pineapple pal, one of the kids' favorites.

The February program was held in conjunction with Dental Health Month and included a visit from Dr. Courtney Williams, Dr. Wendy Gregory, and staff members from Smiles of Arkansas. Smiles of Arkansas is new to the Hempstead County area. This dental clinic celebrated their grand opening in January 2011 and the staff is very excited about the opportunity to host a "Color Me" program.

Students learned that brushing their teeth for two minutes twice a day, flossing, and

eating healthful foods are the best way to take care of their teeth and gums. They sampled string beans, yellow peppers and radishes, which help the body to absorb calcium. Each child also received a travel toothbrush from Smiles of Arkansas, so they could never miss an opportunity to brush.





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In recognition of Arkansas Public Health Week and in conjunction with this year's theme, "Safety is No Accident", members of the Magnolia Fire Department were invited to the **Columbia County** Health Unit on Wednesday, April 6th to promote fire safety to the children visiting the health unit that day. The children heard fire safety presentations and received coloring books and stickers. The highlight of the day was an opportunity to sit in Fire Pup's lap.



The **Nevada County** Health Unit sponsored a chamber coffee to celebrate Arkansas Public Health Week. Debbie Henderson, Administrator, set up a booth with pamphlets about injury prevention which included bicycle safety, water safety, teen drivers, watercraft safety, life jacket fast facts, burn prevention, ATV safety, and the CHNS and CHPS newsletter. Health Unit staff provided finger foods.



Approximately 50 were in attendance for the event.

Staff at the **Clark County** Health Unit rotated out Wednesday, April 6, 2011, as the office hosted the Arkadelphia Chamber of Commerce Community Coffee. Colleagues made healthy snacks for the 100 plus who attended. This event was planned in 2010 to help make the public more aware of what the local health unit does. Information on injury prevention for falls and fireworks, along with ATV safety were available to the public. In addition there was information on smoking cessation, WIC and breast care.

Around the Region

Suellen Simpson, administrator, **Hot Spring County** Health Unit, presented "Nutrition for the Elderly" to the Area Agency on Aging Senior Companion program. After the presentation, she gave a brief talk on services the health department offers including, BreastCare, family planning, immunizations, WIC, tobacco prevention and cessation, emergency preparedness, and injury prevention.

Rebecca Wright, **Ouachita County** Health Unit Administrator, provided a talk to the Camden Leadership group about ADH services, AHOC (health coalition) and the tobacco Quitline. Of the 15 participants, none of them were aware of the Quitline program. Quitline cards and health unit brochures were distributed to each participant. Some of the participants requested Quitline signs for their work place. Rebecca has also been promoting the upcoming BRFFS that will be done in Ouachita County.

On Friday, March 18, staff from the **Clark County** Health Unit went to Cabe Middle School (CMS) and Goza Middle School to provide Tdap clinics. The day began with John Miller, Janet Thornton and Tommie Rogers going to CMS where a total of 18 vaccines were given. At Goza Middle School, Miller, Rogers and Terry Sims, the new RN, worked with Jo McCain, school nurse, and two student nurses to administer 106 vaccinations to students.

Brenda Huff, **Polk County** Health Unit Administrator, gave an SOS t-shirt to every child who came into the health unit during Public Health Week. The back of the shirt depicts the cost of a pack a day habit.

In **Nevada County**, Ryan Ragan, Disease Intervention Specialist, and Edie Greenwood, Community Health Nurse Specialist, presented "Communicable

Disease in Arkansas" to Prescott High School male and female students, separately. The PowerPoint contained sexually transmitted disease (STD) data on the national, state, and county-specific level. The local health unit was approached about doing these presentations because the school felt they had a problem. The presentation included information on different STDs, signs, symptoms, complications, and prevention. Also included was a slide on how the local health unit can help if you suspect you have a problem.

Edie discussed teen pregnancy with the young women and how the local health unit can assist with reproductive health. In addition, when speaking about Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), the students were informed about Gardasil, the immunization for HPV, and how they can obtain the vaccinations through their local health unit. Edie also told the young women how first-hand and second-hand smoke can effect HPV.